

**To:** Hestmark, Martin[Hestmark.Martin@epa.gov]  
**From:** Ostrander, David  
**Sent:** Sun 8/16/2015 5:25:04 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Animas River - Fire Drill

Our response program has a limited perspective and a focus on emergency response. We don't connect effectively or thoroughly understand what the water program has to offer. I suggest we find a way to get the water program integrated into the long term plan and not just rely on the superfund toxicological ecorisk approach. There will be some resistance from SF but we shouldn't limit our thinking on this.

Thanks

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Hermann, Karl" <Hermann.Karl@epa.gov>  
**Date:** August 10, 2015 at 12:12:12 PM MDT  
**To:** "Ostrander, David" <Ostrander.David@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** "Spence, Sandra" <Spence.Sandra@epa.gov>, "Dewald, Tommy" <Dewald.Tommy@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: Animas River - Fire Drill

FYI

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Karl A. Hermann

Monitoring and Assessment

Water Quality Unit, Region 8

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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303-312-6628



Dave Evans wants to know what sort of assistance AWPD and the water monitoring program in Region 8 can provide for the effort, to “assist the Regions in assessing, modeling, understanding the impacts of the spill”. Dave asked that we contact the Regional water program also, to see how they are involved and how the water program capabilities may help the response team. At the moment, I think they are just looking for ideas of how we can help, not the actual results, though those would likely need to follow soon.

### **Ideas – let me know how feasible these would be**

We could potentially use our databases to gather background info. From a CNN report (<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/07/us/colorado-epa-mine-river-spill-irpt/>), it sounds like this is related to the Gold King Mine, a suspended mine near Durango, CO, and flows down into New Mexico where the Animas River meets the San Juan river. The CNN report says “Officials said they believe the spill carried heavy metals, mainly iron, zinc and copper, from the mine into a creek that feeds into the Animas River.”

1. We can use the Upstream/Downstream capabilities of NHDPlus – not entirely sure how this would work. Maybe find the Animas River near Durango and have it navigate downstream, to get the stream network and then use that to do an intersection with the 305b/303d/impaired waters with TMDLs layers to pull that information?
2. In ATTAINS, 2010 is the latest published data for Colorado, but we just opened the review for CO 2012 to Karl Hermann in Region 8. So, we may be able to search through that data to get background info on metals impairments.
3. Specifically, we could look at any TMDLs for Gold King Mine.
4. The most recent New Mexico data in ATTAINS is from the 2014 cycle.
5. In STORET, we could look for information on iron, zinc and copper for the river and downstream

Dave is contacting ORD to ask about modeling capabilities they may have. He has also contacted Lynda Hall and Jim Havard asking about Doug and Dwight’s expertise.

Any other ideas?

Thanks,

Wendy

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Wendy Reid

US EPA, Office of Water

Phone: 202-566-1705

[Reid.Wendy@epa.gov](mailto:Reid.Wendy@epa.gov)

**From:** Evans, David

**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2015 12:19 PM

**To:** Reid, Wendy

**Cc:** Best-Wong, Benita

**Subject:** FW: Animas River

Wendy,

Here are the email communications I just mentioned.

I'll check in with ORD on their modeling capabilities, and you check in with any others you wish in AWPD and Region 8 monitoring program to identify what our capabilities are, and extent to which Region 8 may already have effectively involved water monitoring experts.

Thanks, and let me know any questions.

Dave

**From:** Best-Wong, Benita

**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2015 10:34 AM  
**To:** Evans, David  
**Subject:** FW: Animas River

Dave please follow up with Susan and others to see how we can assist.  
Thanks

Sent from my Windows Phone

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**From:** Kopocis, Ken  
**Sent:** 8/10/2015 7:06 AM  
**To:** Gilinsky, Ellen  
**Cc:** Best-Wong, Benita; Grevatt, Peter; Southerland, Elizabeth; Sawyers, Andrew; Shapiro, Mike  
**Subject:** RE: Animas River

ORD has been contacted separately. I am looking at what OW might contribute.

**From:** Gilinsky, Ellen  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2015 8:05 AM  
**To:** Kopocis, Ken  
**Cc:** Best-Wong, Benita; Grevatt, Peter; Southerland, Elizabeth; Sawyers, Andrew; Shapiro, Mike  
**Subject:** Re: Animas River

I would think ORD has modeling tools to predict effects.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2015, at 6:52 AM, Kopocis, Ken <[Kopocis.Ken@epa.gov](mailto:Kopocis.Ken@epa.gov)> wrote:

I have seen some traffic over the weekend and have been following the mine waste spill into the Animas River.

To what extent do we have the ability to assist the Regions in assessing, modeling, understanding the impacts of the spill?

Unfortunately, the news keeps getting worse.

Let's be prepared to discuss at staff meeting, if not before.

Ken Kopocis

Office of Water

U.S. EPA

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